parts has been undertaken in Singapore and suitable promotional measures undertaken to intensify marketing.

Lowering of interest rates on Loans by Banks

3294. SHRI RAJNI RANJAN SAHU: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that bank interest rates are high in India as compared to the rates prevailing in foreign countries;

(b) whether Government have any proposal to lower the rates of interest on loans extended by banks;

(c) if so, to what extent; and

(d) if not, what are the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI JANARDHAN POOJARI): (a) The Reserve Bank of India has laid down different interest rates for different class of borrowers/activities While under Differential Rate of Interest Scheme loans are given at an annual interest rate of 4 per cent, the maximum rate of interest is 16.5 per annum. Thus the maximum lending rate of 16.5 per cent in India is not comparable with lending rates in other countries.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) All leading rates of Scheduled Commercial Banks stipulated at levels above 15 per cent were reduced by one percentage point with effect from 1st April, 1987. The Reserve Bank of India has reported that further reduction is not possible since it is likely to adversely affect the already lower levels of profit margins of banks. However, at the time of natural calamities in the country banks do consider the proposals for relief in interest rates.

Bifurcation of FERA

3295. SHRI RAJNI RANJAN SAHU: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to bifurcate FERA for facilitating joint ventures and import of technology; and

(b) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF EXPENDITURE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI B. K. GADHVI): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

Restricting of entry points to Nepal

3296 SHRI RAJNI RANJAN SAHU: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have taken a decision to restrict entry points to Nepal with a view to cope up with rush of tourists; and

(b) if so, what are the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) and (b) In order to regulate the entry into and exit from India along Indo-Nepal border of foreigners other than Nepalis the Govt. of India has restricted w.e.f. 1-10-87 the entry and exist of foreigners (other than Nepali and Indian nationals) only from three checkposts viz. Raxaul in Bihar, Sonauli in U.P. and Raniganj in West Bengal. Indian and Nepali nationals, however, can enter from India to Nepal and vice-versa from all the designated/immigration checkposts.